



Teaching
Regulation
Agency

Mr Alexander Mellor: Professional conduct panel outcome

**Panel decision and reasons on behalf of the
Secretary of State for Education**

September 2025

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Professional conduct panel decision and recommendations, and decision on behalf of the Secretary of State

Teacher: Mr Alexander Mellor

TRA reference: 0049392

Date of determination: 16 September 2025

Former employer: The Forest School, West Sussex

Introduction

A professional conduct panel (“the panel”) of the Teaching Regulation Agency (“the TRA”) convened virtually between 8 and 16 September 2025 to consider the case of Mr Alexander Mellor.

The panel members were Miss Louisa Munton (teacher panellist – in the chair), Mrs Shabanna Robertson (lay panellist) and Mr Maurice Smith (lay panellist).

The legal adviser to the panel was Mr Tom Walker of Blake Morgan LLP solicitors.

The presenting officer for the TRA was Mr Alexander Barnfield.

Mr Mellor was present but was not represented.

The hearing took place in public and was recorded.

Allegations

The panel considered the allegations set out in the notice of proceedings dated 15 April 2025.

It was alleged that Mr Mellor was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, in that:

Whilst employed as a teacher at the Forest School, Comptons Lane, Horsham, West Sussex ("the School"):

1. On one or more occasions between around February 2011 and September 2012, you:
 - a. Between around 1 February and 25 March 2011:
 - i. rested a hand on Pupil A who was standing against a wall;
 - ii. placed your hand on Pupil B's leg or legs;
 - b. On or around 19 September 2012, placed yourself in close proximity to one or more pupils;
 - c. On or around 20 September 2012, caused or allowed Pupil E to sit on your shoulders;
 - d. or around 21 September 2012, caused or allowed Pupil F to come into the PE Office asking for sweets.
2. On one or more occasions prior to 1 May 2013, you used inappropriate and/ or offensive language towards and/ or in the presence of one of more pupils by:
 - a. Referring to Pupil G as "sheep boy";
 - b. Using words to the effect "I wouldn't want sheep boy because no one else would want to play";
 - c. Making remarks of a sexual nature about Pupil G's mother by using words such as or similar to "Double D" and/ or "Where's the twins?" referring to her breasts.
3. In around February 2018, you:
 - a. Sat alone with Pupil N in close proximity on a bench in the sports hall;
 - b. Gave Pupil N a lift home;

- c. Gave Pupil O a birthday card and/ or a chocolate bar as a gift.
- 4. Between 9 and 16 February 2018, during a School skiing trip, you:
 - a. Caused or allowed Pupil Q's legs to be laid across your legs while you administered first aid;
 - b. Cupped Pupil Q's hands with your own;
 - c. Placed your hands on Pupil R's legs and or thighs while administering first aid;
 - d. Stroked Pupil R's hair;
- 5. On one or more occasions between around 3 and 15 July 2019, while pupils were changing in the PE changing room, you:
 - a. Remained in the room;
 - b. Sat in the room;
 - c. Looked and/ or stared at pupils;
 - d. Talked to the pupils.
- 6. Your conduct at 1 and/ or 2 and/ or 3 and/ or 4 and/ or 5 above was:
 - a. A failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries
 - b. Sexually motivated

Summary of evidence

Documents

In advance of the hearing, the panel received a bundle of documents which included:

Section 1: Chronology and anonymised pupil list – pages 1 to 11

Section 2: Notice of proceedings and response – pages 12 to 60

Section 3: Statement of Agreed Facts – pages 61 to 69

Section 4: Teaching Regulation Agency witness statements – pages 70 to 105

Section 5: Teaching Regulation Agency documents – pages 106 to 533

Section 6: Teacher documents – pages 534 to 535

The panel members confirmed that they had read all of the documents within the bundle, in advance of the hearing and the additional documents that the panel decided to admit.

In the consideration of this case, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: Disciplinary procedures for the teaching profession 2020, (the “Procedures”).

Witnesses

The panel heard oral evidence from the following witnesses called by the presenting officer:

- Witness A ([REDACTED])
- Witness B ([REDACTED])
- Witness C ([REDACTED])
- Witness D ([REDACTED])
- Witness E ([REDACTED])
- Witness F ([REDACTED])
- Witness G ([REDACTED])
- Witness H ([REDACTED])
- Witness I ([REDACTED])

Mr Mellor gave oral evidence on his own account.

Decision and reasons

The panel announced its decision and reasons as follows:

The panel carefully considered the case before it and reached a decision.

By way of background, Mr Alexander Mellor ('Mr Mellor') as employed by the Forest School ("the School") as a PE Teacher and Duke of Edinburgh Coordinator from 1 December 2010. During the course of his employment at the School, Mr Mellor was subject to a series of disciplinary investigations in relation to professional conduct and breaches of boundaries said to have occurred between 2011 and 2014 and again between 2018 and 2019.

On 22 February 2020, Mr Mellor was dismissed from his role at the School as a result of allegations of inappropriate conduct. The decision was subsequently upheld by way of an

appeal hearing on 15 July 2021. The conduct complained of concerned inappropriate physical contact with pupils and/or breaching boundaries by the giving of gifts and lifts in breach of policy.

The panel were presented with a statement of agreed facts which Mr Mellor had signed. This statement confirmed that Mr Mellor admitted all the factual allegations with the exception of allegation 5c and 6b. However, it became clear in the course of the hearing that some of the factual admissions by Mr Mellor were equivocal or inconsistent with the other evidence in the case.

Findings of fact

The findings of fact are as follows:

The panel found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you proved, for these reasons.

- 1. On one or more occasions between around February 2011 and September 2012, you:**
 - a. Between around 1 February and 25 March 2011:**
 - i. rested a hand on Pupil A who was standing against a wall;**
 - ii. placed your hand on Pupil B's leg or legs;**
 - b.**
 - c. On or around 20 September 2012, caused or allowed Pupil E to sit on your shoulders;**
 - d. or around 21 September 2012, caused or allowed Pupil F to come into the PE Office asking for sweets.**

The panel heard evidence that, on an occasion in March 2011 Mr Mellor stood resting his hand on the shoulder of Pupil A, who had their back to the wall, outside the School drama studio. The panel heard evidence that the physical contact in question was unnecessary and not justified by any possible need for restraint or reassurance. Mr Mellor accepted this particular, albeit stating that he was attempting to calm the pupil down. The panel found allegation 1ai proved.

The panel heard evidence that on an occasion between around 1 February and 25 March 2011 Mr Mellor knelt in front of Pupil B, who was sitting on a bench in the School changing rooms, and placed his hands on the pupil's knees. There were other pupils present in the changing room. The panel heard evidence that the physical contact in question was

unnecessary and not justified by any possible need for reassurance. Mr Mellor accepted this particular. The panel found allegation 1aⁱⁱ proved.

As regards allegation 1c, the panel heard evidence from Witness A that Mr Mellor caused and allowed Pupil E to sit on his shoulders, whilst re-attaching part of a goal net. Mr Mellor admitted this action, and stated that it was a momentary act of poor judgment. The panel found allegation 1c proved.

As regards to allegation 1d, the panel heard evidence that, on 21 September 2012, Pupil F came to the PE Office asking Mr Mellor for sweets. Mr Mellor admitted this allegation on the basis that he would reward pupils with sweets, as either a motivation or reward following a class activity.

The Staff Code of Conduct stated that gifts should only be given as part of an agreed reward system and/or that they are of insignificant value and given to all pupils equally and/or that Teachers should not behave in a manner which is favourable or unfavourable to individual pupils.

The panel found this allegation proved on the basis that Mr Mellor allowed Pupil F to come into the PE office asking for sweets. The evidence was consistent with Mr Mellor allowing Pupil F to come into the PE office to ask for sweets but the panel was not satisfied that he specifically caused this pupil to do so.

2. On one or more occasions prior to 1 May 2013, you used inappropriate and/ or offensive language towards and/ or in the presence of one of more pupils by:

- a.**
- b. Using words to the effect “I wouldn’t want sheep boy because no one else would want to play”;**
- c. Making remarks of a sexual nature about Pupil G’s mother by using words such as or similar to “Double D” and/ or “Where’s the twins?” referring to her breasts.**

The panel noted that this allegation relates to conduct said to have occurred over 12 years ago. There was no direct witness evidence in relation to it. However, the panel did receive evidence that Pupil G had attributed such comments to Mr Mellor when discussing matters with his parent, who in turn contacted the School. Mr Mellor admitted that he may have used such terms but stated that he did so in the context of him joining in a conversation that pupils were already having. Mr Mellor stated that he regretted joining in this conversation, and agreed that it was inappropriate and/or offensive for him to do so.

In relation to allegation 2b the panel is satisfied that Mr Mellor used words to the effect of "I wouldn't want sheep boy because no one else would want to play" in the context of a conversation already being had by the pupils.

As regards allegation 2c the panel noted that Mr Mellor accepted the essence of this allegation, albeit could not recall the specific terms used. The panel was satisfied that, prior to 1 May 2013, Mr Mellor made comments to Pupil G and/or his friends about Pupil G's mother to the effect of "where's the twins?" in relation to her breasts. However, the panel was not satisfied that the term 'double D was used'. There was no independent evidence to support this term being used.

3. In around February 2018, you:

- a. Sat alone with Pupil N in close proximity on a bench in the sports hall;**
- b. Gave Pupil N a lift home;**
- c. Gave Pupil O a birthday card and/ or a chocolate bar as a gift.**

As regards allegation 3a, the panel heard evidence that, on a date in or around February 2018, Mr Mellor sat in close proximity to Pupil N on a bench in the Sports Hall. Mr Mellor identified this pupil and confirmed that this was the same pupil to whom he gave a lift home. Mr Mellor and the pupil were looking at a laptop resting on their legs. Mr Mellor admitted that his proximity to the pupil was unnecessary and a breach of boundaries. The panel was satisfied that the particular occurred and found allegation 3a proved.

In relation to allegation 3b, the panel heard evidence that Mr Mellor drove Pupil N home in his car. There was no one else present in the car. Mr Mellor stated that he had parental permission to do this, and there was no evidence to rebut that contention. However, there was no evidence that this was a pre-planned and approved action. The Staff Code of Conduct prohibits giving a lift in a car to a pupil alone except in exceptional circumstances, and notes that if such transport is unavoidable then a senior member of staff should be notified, which was not done by Mr Mellor. The panel finds allegation 3b proved.

As regards allegation 3c, the panel heard evidence that, in or around February 2018, Mr Mellor gave Pupil O three chocolate bars and a birthday card for his birthday. Mr Mellor accepts this allegation. The panel found allegation 3c proved.

4. Between 9 and 16 February 2018, during a School skiing trip, you:

- a. Caused or allowed Pupil Q's legs to be laid across your legs while you administered first aid;**
- b. Cupped Pupil Q's hands with your own;**

c. Placed your hands on Pupil R's legs and or thighs while administering first aid;

d.

The panel heard evidence that, on an occasion between 9 and 16 February 2018, during a School ski trip, Pupil Q wounded his knee. Mr Mellor administered first aid to the wound. Mr Mellor sat on Pupil Q's bed with Pupil Q's legs across his lap. The panel heard evidence that first aid had previously been delivered without Pupil Q's legs laid across Mr Mellor's legs. This position was adopted for longer than was necessary and the physical position was also unnecessarily proximate for the first aid that was required. Mr Mellor admitted this particular. The panel found this particular proved.

As regards to particular 4b, the panel heard evidence that on an occasion during the School ski trip between 9 and 16 February 2018 Mr Mellor cupped Pupil Q's hands with his own, to warm them. Mr Mellor admitted this allegation and the panel found this particular proved.

As regards to allegation 4c, the panel heard evidence that on an occasion during the School ski trip between 9 and 16 February 2018, Mr Mellor crouched in front of Pupil R and put his hands on Pupil R's legs whilst administering first aid in relation to a nose bleed. Mr Mellor admitted this particular. The panel found this particular proved.

5. On one or more occasions between around 3 and 15 July 2019, while pupils were changing in the PE changing room, you:

a. Remained in the room;

b. Sat in the room;

c. Looked and/ or stared at pupils;

d. Talked to the pupils.

The panel heard evidence that, on one or more occasions between 3 and 15 July 2019, Mr Mellor remained in the School PE changing room and sat in the changing room and talked to pupils. The allegation arose from a complaint by a parent to the effect that Mr Mellor would be present in the PE changing room longer than was necessary, and that he would over engage with pupils by looking at them and talking to them whilst they were changing. The essence of the allegation was that Mr Mellor's actions were over-familiar and inappropriate, and went beyond that required by the requirement to supervise pupils changing.

Mr Mellor accepted the factual basis of the allegations and accepted particular 5c on the basis that he looked at pupils as opposed to 'stared'. Mr Mellor stated that his actions were due to his supervising pupils in the PE changing room for the purpose of monitoring their

behaviour. The panel heard evidence from Witness A that teachers should supervise pupils in the PE changing room for as long as possible, and this guidance was also reflected in the School PE Handbook. The panel found the admission of Mr Mellor consistent with the other evidence in the case and found this allegation proved on the basis of 'looked' (allegation 5c).

6. Your conduct at 1 and/ or 2 and/ or 3 and/ or 4 and/ or 5 above was:

a. A failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries

b.

The panel did not find allegations 1b; 2a or 4d proven and thus there was no need to consider them under allegation 6a.

Mr Mellor admitted that his conduct breached professional boundaries. Notwithstanding this admission, the panel proceeded to assess the evidence relevant to this allegation.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 1ai. The panel heard evidence that the action of Mr Mellor was connected to him consoling the pupil. The panel also heard evidence that the physical contact was only for a few seconds. The panel was not satisfied that this particular was sufficiently prolonged or serious to amount to a breach of professional boundaries.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 1aii and took the view that the touching of the leg was distinct because it was an area in which no contact whatsoever was warranted by the situation. The panel heard evidence that there were other ways in which Mr Mellor could have consoled the Pupil rather than touching the leg. The panel took the view that this did amount to a breach of professional boundaries.

The panel considered the evidence in relation to allegation 1c, which concerned the placing of a pupil on Mr Mellor's shoulders to re-attach a goal net. The panel regarded this as unnecessary contact with a pupil involving close physical contact around the leg and/or groin area. The panel was satisfied that this was poor judgement and a breach of professional boundaries.

The panel carefully considered the evidence in relation to allegation 1d. Mr Mellor stated that he would reward pupils for their performance and this pupil had come to the office to ask for sweets to 'try his luck' in obtaining them. The panel accepted this evidence. There was no evidence that this, in and of itself, represented a breach of School policy. There was no evidence which satisfied the panel that the actions of Mr Mellor represented a breach of professional boundaries.

As regards allegations 2b and 2c, the panel took the view that even though Mr Mellor did not instigate the conversations, he played a role in encouraging the use of inappropriate

and offensive language. The words used in particular 2b were demeaning to the pupil. The panel is satisfied that by joining in such a conversation, Mr Mellor's actions at particular 2b represented a failure to maintain professional boundaries.

Similarly, by joining in such a conversation about a pupil's mother's breasts in the company of other pupils, Mr Mellor acquiesced with the use of sexualised terms. The panel is satisfied that particular 2c represented a failure to maintain professional boundaries.

Allegation 3a concerned an allegation that Mr Mellor was sitting alone with a pupil in close proximity on a bench in a sports hall. The panel heard evidence from Mr Mellor that he had been assisting the pupil with homework, sharing a laptop, and had arranged to do this in the Sports Hall where he knew other people would be present. The panel was not satisfied that this action amounted to a breach of professional boundaries.

As regards allegation 3b, whilst Mr Mellor had sought parental permission to give the pupil a lift home, in the absence of this being a planned and permissioned action in accordance with School policy, it was clearly a breach of professional boundaries and well-established safeguarding principles.

In relation to allegation 3c, Mr Mellor agreed that he did not give gifts consistently to all pupils in his football team and tutor group. The panel took the view that the actions of giving chocolate bars and a birthday card to secondary school pupils is over-familiar and unnecessary and represents a breach of professional boundaries. Furthermore, inconsistent giving of gifts in such circumstances poses an additional risk of demonstrating favouritism as well as compromising the relationship that a teacher should have with a pupil. The panel is satisfied that the actions of Mr Mellor also represent a breach of professional boundaries on this basis.

As regards to allegation 4a, the panel was satisfied that Mr Mellor had other options available to him in terms of first aid treatment which would have minimised contact and proximity to Pupil Q. Whilst the panel notes that the conduct took place in the presence of others, the contact was unnecessary. It was deemed by Witness D, who witnessed it, to be inappropriate in nature. The panel found that this amounted to a breach of professional boundaries.

In relation to allegation 4b, the panel was satisfied that Mr Mellor had no need to warm Pupil Q's hands. There was no evidence that this was a necessary thing to do at that time or in that way. The panel took the view that, given the age of the pupils (secondary school age) this was not an appropriate action to take. It was an overly familiar action and represented a breach of professional boundaries.

As regards allegation 4c, the panel found that Mr Mellor's actions in placing his hands on Pupil R's legs were not necessary and had nothing to do with the administration of the type

of first aid required to treat a nosebleed. The panel took the view that Mr Mellor's actions amounted to a breach of professional boundaries.

In relation to allegation 5, the evidence was general in nature and there was no direct witness evidence to support this allegation. The panel accepted that Mr Mellor would be required to supervise pupils whilst in the room and, by necessity talk and look at them at various points. The panel was also satisfied that Mr Mellor may need to take a register during this time on a laptop, and that in doing so it may be convenient to sit down. The panel was unable to find that this allegation amounted to a breach of professional boundaries.

The panel found the following particulars of the allegation(s) against you not proved, for these reasons:

1. On one or more occasions between around February 2011 and September 2012, you:

a.

i.

ii.

b. On or around 19 September 2012, placed yourself in close proximity to one or more pupils;

c.

d.

As regards, allegation 1b the panel heard evidence from Witness G. However, in oral evidence she conceded that she was unable to give a clear timeline as to when the incidents were said to have occurred. More particularly, her evidence was impressionistic and general in as far as she was unable to highlight a particular incident or identify a specific incident or context such as to enable determination of what amounted to 'close proximity'. Witness G wrote an email closer to the time in question which recorded her concerns, but 'proximity' was not referred to as a concern. Given this, and notwithstanding the admission by Mr Mellor, the panel found allegation 1b not proved.

2. On one or more occasions prior to 1 May 2013, you used inappropriate and/ or offensive language towards and/ or in the presence of one of more pupils by:

a. Referring to Pupil G as "sheep boy";

b.

c.

The panel refers to the findings above in relation to allegation 2. As regards allegation 2a the panel could discern no reference to Pupil G as a 'sheep boy' beyond that in allegation 2b and thus found allegation 2a not proved. Finding 2a proved in such circumstances would result in an unnecessary duplication of the allegations.

4. Between 9 and 16 February 2018, during a School skiing trip, you:

a.

b.

c.

d. Stroked Pupil R's hair;

As regards allegation 4d, the panel heard diverging evidence in relation to this. Witness C described this incident as occurring in the context of first aid. However, Witness F described the incident as taking place during a disco whilst Mr Mellor was talking about 'dirty dancing'.

Mr Mellor accepts that there was an incident in which, whilst administering first aid for a nosebleed, he did touch Pupil R's hair but denies that he was stroking it. Mr Mellor stated that he was checking his head for an injury from a previous incident. This was corroborated by Witness D's evidence. The panel carefully considered the evidence and took the view that the incident was more likely than not to have occurred whilst administering first aid. However, the evidence given was not clear as to whether Mr Mellor was simply touching or stroking in the sense of repeated and prolonged touching. The panel also notes that Pupil R, when asked about the incident during the School's investigation, stated that Mr Mellor made no inappropriate contact with him at all. The panel could not be satisfied on the balance of probabilities that stroking occurred and thus found allegation 4d not proved.

6. Your conduct at 1 and/ or 2 and/ or 3 and/ or 4 and/ or 5 above was:

a.

b. Sexually motivated.

Mr Mellor disputed allegation 6b. The panel did not find allegations 1b; 2a or 4d proven and thus there was no need to consider them under allegation 6b.

Sexual motivation was not directly alleged by the School in the course of their disciplinary procedures, and the notion that the actions may amount to a pattern of grooming on the part of Mr Mellor was not a feature of the investigation until 2018. This has inevitably had

consequences for the scope and nature of the evidence which has been collated. However, this is not determinative of the allegation, and the panel has considered this issue on the basis of the evidence before it, taking the approach that sexually motivated conduct is that which is sexual in nature and either motivated by sexual gratification or the pursuit of a sexual relationship.

Taking this definition, the panel was unable to discern any evidence that the allegations found proved were sexually motivated. The conduct at allegation 2c involved sexualised comments but there was no evidence that Mr Mellor acquiesced in this conversation for sexual gratification or to pursue a sexual relationship.

The panel did find that Mr Mellor treated some pupils differently, with regard to gift-giving (allegation 3). Whilst this conduct was inappropriate and ill-advised, there was insufficient evidence to establish that any of this conduct was sexually motivated either when considered in isolation or as part of a broader pattern.

Findings as to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute

Having found allegations 1ai and ii; 1c; 1d; 2b; 2c; 3a; 3b; 3c; 4a; 4b; 4c; 5a; 5b; 5c; 5d and 6a proved on the basis set out above, the panel went on to consider whether the facts of those proved allegations amounted to unacceptable professional conduct and/or conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In doing so, the panel had regard to the document Teacher misconduct: The prohibition of teachers, which is referred to as “the Advice” (2022). “Unacceptable professional conduct” is misconduct of a serious nature, falling significantly short of the standard of behaviour expected of a teacher.

The panel also considered whether Mr Mellor’s conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences listed on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

The Advice indicates that where behaviours associated with such an offence exist, a panel is likely to conclude that an individual’s conduct would amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel found that none of these offences were relevant. It is worth noting here that there is no evidence that any actions of Mr Mellor resulted in any actual harm to pupils, although any breach of professional boundaries creates a risk of harm to pupils.

The panel considered whether the conduct of Mr Mellor, in relation to the facts found proved, involved breaches of the personal and professional elements of the Teachers’ Standards. In accordance with the Teachers’ Standards, a teacher is expected to demonstrate consistently high standards of personal and professional conduct. The

following statements define the behaviour and attitudes which set the required standard for conduct throughout a teacher's career.

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions (allegation 3b)

The panel took the view that the conduct of Mr Mellor breached the above elements of the Teachers' Standards.

The panel considered whether the actions of Mr Mellor included failures to have regard to relevant statutory guidance such as Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2016). In accordance with KCSIE, teachers are required to be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, such as the child protection policy and staff behaviour policy. The panel found that the actions of Mr Mellor in relation to the allegations found proved did breach KCSIE. The panel did not find that Mr Mellor's conduct breached the Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance.

The actions of Mr Mellor in relation to the elements of Allegation 1 found proved were not serious enough to cross the threshold as to amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

The actions of Mr Mellor in relation to the elements of Allegation 2 found proved involved demeaning a pupil and engaging in inappropriate and offensive conversations about Pupil G's mother. However, the panel did not find that Mr Mellor instigated such conversations, rather he acquiesced in the behaviour of pupils. Whilst satisfied that this conduct breached professional boundaries, the panel did not find that this conduct was so serious as to amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

As regards Allegation 3, the actions of Mr Mellor in giving gifts to a pupil and giving a pupil a lift home involved breaches of the School Policy and the KCSIE Guidance. However, whilst a breach of professional boundaries, these were not so serious such as to amount to unacceptable professional conduct.

As regards Allegation 4, the panel was satisfied that it represented a breach of professional boundaries. However, this conduct was in the context of giving first aid, or attempting to care for, or console pupils, albeit in an unnecessary manner. Furthermore, these actions were in the presence of others and there was no attempt to conceal the actions. The panel did not find that this conduct was sufficiently serious to warrant a finding of unacceptable professional conduct.

As regards Allegation 5, for the reasons outlined above, the panel was not satisfied that this represented a breach of professional boundaries and nor was it satisfied that this amounted to unacceptable professional conduct.

In relation to whether Mr Mellor's actions amounted to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute, the panel took into account the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. It considered the influence that teachers may have on pupils, parents and others in the community. The panel also took account of the uniquely influential role that teachers can hold in pupils' lives and the fact that pupils must be able to view teachers as role models in the way that they behave.

In considering the issue of disrepute, the panel also considered whether Mr Mellor's conduct displayed behaviours associated with any of the offences in the list that begins on pages 12 and 13 of the Advice.

As set out above in the panel's findings as to whether Mr Mellor was guilty of unacceptable professional conduct, the Panel found that none of these offences were relevant.

Whilst the panel did not find that the allegations found proved represented unacceptable professional conduct, the considerations as regards disrepute are distinct. The panel took account of the way the teaching profession is viewed by others. The panel did consider the findings to be so serious as to have a negative impact on Mr Mellor's status as a teacher and the teaching profession more generally.

As regards allegation 2b and 2c, whilst not so serious as to amount to unacceptable professional conduct, the actions involved Mr Mellor being complicit in inappropriate and offensive conversations resulting in a parental complaint. These are actions which would damage the perception of teachers as role models and which may bring the profession into disrepute.

As regards allegation 3b; this action involved a clear breach of established safeguarding principles and School policy. Whilst this action was isolated and did not amount to unacceptable professional conduct, such an action constitutes conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

For the reasons set out above, given the context, allegation 4 is not sufficiently serious to amount to conduct which may bring the profession into disrepute.

For the reasons set out above, the panel did not find that allegation 5 amounted to a breach of professional boundaries and was also not satisfied that it amounted to conduct which may bring the profession into disrepute.

Panel's recommendation to the Secretary of State

Given the panel's findings in respect of conduct which may bring the profession into disrepute (allegations 2b; 2c and 3b), it was necessary for the panel to go on to consider whether it would be appropriate to recommend the imposition of a prohibition order by the Secretary of State.

In considering whether to recommend to the Secretary of State that a prohibition order should be made, the panel had to consider whether it would be an appropriate and proportionate measure, and whether it would be in the public interest to do so. Prohibition orders should not be given in order to be punitive, or to show that blame has been apportioned, although they are likely to have punitive effect.

The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely: the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils...the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.

In the light of the panel's findings against Mr Mellor, which included engaging in inappropriate and offensive conversations with pupils, and giving a pupil a lift home, there was a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession, as the conduct found against Mr Mellor was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.

However, the panel also found that that the conduct was not at the most serious end of the scale. There was a caveat to this, in as far as Mr Mellor had been warned previously that his conduct towards pupils had potentially breached professional boundaries. However, even noting this, there was no allegation that Mr Mellor had directly repeated conduct which he had previously committed, and in all the circumstances his previous warnings do not significantly aggravate the conduct.

In addition to the public interest considerations set out above, the panel went on to consider whether there was a public interest in retaining Mr Mellor in the profession. Mr Mellor had taught for approximately 10 years and demonstrated a clear commitment to the teaching profession. His teaching record had been consistently good and there was also evidence that he contributed effectively to the life of the school.

The panel considered carefully the seriousness of the conduct, noting that the Advice states that the expectation of both the public and pupils, is that members of the teaching profession maintain an exemplary level of integrity and ethical standards at all times.

In view of the clear public interest considerations that were present, the panel considered carefully whether or not it would be proportionate to impose a prohibition order, taking into account the effect that this would have on Mr Mellor.

The panel took further account of the Advice, which suggests that a prohibition order may be appropriate if certain behaviours of a teacher have been proved. No such behaviours were present in this case.

The panel went on to consider the mitigating factors. Mitigating factors may indicate that a prohibition order would not be appropriate or proportionate.

In terms of mitigation, Mr Mellor, had a good teaching record and his actions did not result in harm or expose pupils to a serious risk of harm.

Mr Mellor has also expressed remorse and regret in relation to the incidents. He has shown some insight into his conduct. The panel takes the view that, on balance, there is a limited risk of Mr Mellor repeating this conduct.

The panel first considered whether it would be proportionate to conclude this case with no recommendation of prohibition, considering whether the publication of the findings made by the panel would be sufficient.

The panel was of the view that, applying the standard of the ordinary intelligent citizen, the recommendation of no prohibition order would be both a proportionate and an appropriate response. Given that the nature and severity of the conduct found proved was at the less serious end of the spectrum and, having considered the mitigating factors that were present, the panel determined that a recommendation for a prohibition order would not be proportionate in this case. The panel considered that the publication of the adverse findings it had made was sufficient to send an appropriate message to Mr Mellor as to the standards of behaviour that are not acceptable, and the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

Decision and reasons on behalf of the Secretary of State

I have given very careful consideration to this case and to the recommendation of the panel in respect of sanction.

In considering this case, I have also given very careful attention to the Advice that the Secretary of State has published concerning the prohibition of teachers.

In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations proven and found that in respect of the proven facts of allegations 2b; 2c and 3b amount to conduct that may bring the profession into disrepute.

In this case, the panel has found some of the allegations not proven, and found that the proven allegations do not amount to unacceptable professional conduct. The panel also found that some of the allegations did not amount to conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute. I have therefore put those matters entirely from my mind.

The panel has made a recommendation to the Secretary of State that Mr Alexander Mellor should not be the subject of a prohibition order. The panel has recommended that the findings of conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, should be published and that such an action is proportionate and in the public interest.

In particular, the panel has found that Mr Mellor is in breach of the following standards:

- Teachers uphold public trust in the profession and maintain high standards of ethics and behaviour, within and outside school, by:
- treating pupils with dignity, building relationships rooted in mutual respect, and at all times observing proper boundaries appropriate to a teacher's professional position
- having regard for the need to safeguard pupils' well-being, in accordance with statutory provisions (allegation 3b).

The panel was satisfied that the conduct of Mr Mellor, involved breaches of the responsibilities and duties set out in statutory guidance Keeping children safe in education (KCSIE). The panel did not find the conduct involved breaches of Working Together to Safeguard Children.

The panel finds that the conduct of Mr Mellor fell significantly short of the standards expected of the profession.

I have to determine whether the imposition of a prohibition order is proportionate and in the public interest. In considering that for this case, I have considered the overall aim of a prohibition order which is to protect pupils and to maintain public confidence in the profession. I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order in this case would achieve that aim taking into account the impact that it will have on the individual teacher. I have also asked myself, whether a less intrusive measure, such as the published finding of conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, would itself be sufficient to achieve the overall aim. I have to consider whether the consequences of such a publication are themselves sufficient. I have considered therefore whether or not prohibiting Mr Mellor, and the impact that will have on the teacher, is proportionate and in the public interest.

In this case, I have considered the extent to which a prohibition order would protect children/safeguard pupils. The panel has observed, "In accordance with KCSIE, teachers are required to be aware of systems within their school or college which support safeguarding, such as the child protection policy and staff behaviour policy. The panel found that the actions of Mr Mellor in relation to the allegations found proved did breach KCSIE." A prohibition order would therefore prevent such a risk from being present in the future. However, I have also considered the following comment from the

panel “Mr Mellor, had a good teaching record and his actions did not result in harm or expose pupils to a serious risk of harm.”

I have also taken into account the panel’s comments on insight and remorse, which the panel sets out as follows, “Mr Mellor has also expressed remorse and regret in relation to the incidents. He has shown some insight into his conduct. The panel takes the view that, on balance, there is a limited risk of Mr Mellor repeating this conduct.” I have therefore given this element some weight in reaching my decision.

I have gone on to consider the extent to which a prohibition order would maintain public confidence in the profession. The panel observe, “The panel had regard to the particular public interest considerations set out in the Advice and, having done so, found a number of them to be relevant in this case, namely: the safeguarding and wellbeing of pupils...the maintenance of public confidence in the profession, and declaring and upholding proper standards of conduct.”

I have had to consider that the public has a high expectation of professional standards of all teachers and that the public might regard a failure to impose a prohibition order as a failure to uphold those high standards. In weighing these considerations, I have had to consider the matter from the point of view of an “ordinary intelligent and well-informed citizen.”

I have considered whether the publication of a finding of conduct likely to bring the profession into disrepute, in the absence of a prohibition order, can itself be regarded by such a person as being a proportionate response to the misconduct that has been found proven in this case.

I have also considered the impact of a prohibition order on Mr Mellor himself and the panel comment “Mr Mellor had taught for approximately 10 years and demonstrated a clear commitment to the teaching profession. His teaching record had been consistently good and there was also evidence that he contributed effectively to the life of the school.”

A prohibition order would prevent Mr Mellor from teaching. A prohibition order would also clearly deprive the public of his contribution to the profession for the period that it is in force.

In this case, I have placed considerable weight to the following, “In the light of the panel’s findings against Mr Mellor, which included engaging in inappropriate and offensive conversations with pupils, and giving a pupil a lift home, there was a strong public interest consideration in declaring proper standards of conduct in the profession, as the conduct found against Mr Mellor was outside that which could reasonably be tolerated.”

I have also placed considerable weight on the finding that “the panel also found that that the conduct was not at the most serious end of the scale. There was a caveat to this, in as far as Mr Mellor had been warned previously that his conduct towards pupils had potentially

breached professional boundaries. However, even noting this, there was no allegation that Mr Mellor had directly repeated conduct which he had previously committed, and in all the circumstances his previous warnings do not significantly aggravate the conduct.”

I have given weight in my consideration of sanction therefore, to the contribution that Mr Mellor has made and could continue to make to the profession.

For these reasons, I have concluded that a prohibition order is not proportionate or in the public interest. I consider that the publication of the findings made would be sufficient to send an appropriate message to the teacher as to the standards of behaviour that were not acceptable and that the publication would meet the public interest requirement of declaring proper standards of the profession.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SABuxcey', with a stylized, cursive script.

Decision maker: Sarah Buxcey

Date: 17 September 2025

This decision is taken by the decision maker named above on behalf of the Secretary of State.